

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated December 1, 2006, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 2-6, 9-11, 15, 16 and 23-30 are allowed. Claims 17-20 are rejected to by the Examiner. Claims 17 and 18 have been amended. Claims 2-6, 9-11, 15-20 and 23-30 remain pending in this application.

In the Office Action, claims 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112. second paragraph.

Claim 17 has been amended, so the rejection of claims 17-20 is now moot.


Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. *A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.*

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: **1 March 2007**

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